

Message Text

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ACTION EA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

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INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

DEPT OF DEFENSE WASHDC

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USIAC

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SUBJ: USINFO

1. THE UNITED STATES INFORMATION SERVICE, AMERICAN EMBASSY
GENERAL SERVICES ORGANIZATION AND AN EMBASSY HOUSING COMPOUND --
SEIZED BY A PROTEST GROUP IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF SATURDAY,
JUNE 28 -- CONTINUED UNDER OCCUPATION JUNE 29. WHILE AMERICANS
HAVE BEEN ALLOWED PERIODIC ACCESS TO THE HOUSING COMPOUND IN
ORDER TO REMOVE PERSONAL EFFECTS AND HAVE BEEN TOLD THEY MAY
REMAIN THERE, ALL EIGHT PERSONS LIVING IN THE 18-HOUSE COM-
PLEX HAVE TEMPORARILY MOVED. ACCESS TO THE U.S. INFORMATION
SERVICE AND EMBASSY GENERAL SERVICES AREA HAS BEEN COMPLETELY
DENIED BY COMBINATION OF FORMER EMPLOYEES OF THE NOW-DISSOLVED
AID ORGANIZATION, PATHET LAO SOLDIERS AND OTHERS.

THE PROTEST GROUP HAS YET TO INDICATE ITS PURPOSES. HOWEVER, ON
SATURDAY EVENING A LEAFLET WAS DISTRIBUTED ATTACKING UNIVERSAL
AMERICAN ENTERPRISES, A PRIVATE MAINTENANCE CONTRACTOR LOCATED
ON THE EMBASSY GENERAL SERVICES COMPOUND, AS "A HIDING PLACE
FOR SPIES". THE STATEMENT ALSO ACCUSED THE U.S. INFORMATION
SERVICE OF "SPREADING A DECADENT CULTURE AND PROPAGATING
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NEO-COLONIALISM." WHILE THE PROTEST

STATEMENT SAID THE GROUP HAD "SEIZED" THESE TWO INSTALLATIONS, IT DESCRIBED THE ACTION DIRECTED AT THE HOUSING COMPOUND, WHICH IS OWNED BY THE EMBASSY, AS ONE OF "SUPERVISION." IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH U.S. OFFICIALS PROTESTORS ACKNOWLEDGE THE HOUSING COMPLEX IS U.S. GOVERNMENT PROPERTY.

EMBASSY OFFICIALS ARE CONTINUING THEIR ATTEMPT TO CONTACT THE LAO GOVERNMENT ABOUT THIS MATTER AND HAVE OFFERED TO ESCORT LAO OFFICIALS THROUGH THE ENTIRE GENERAL SERVICE ORGANIZATION COMPOUND AND ANSWER ANY INQUIRIES ABOUT ITS, UNIVERSAL AMERICAN ENTERPRISES OR THE U.S. INFORMATION SERVICE'S FUNCTION. (TWO FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS DID IN FACT TOUR GSO ON THE MORNING OF JUNE 28.)

2. MEANWHILE, SVEN BERGGREN, A 40-YEAR-OLD SWEDISH CITIZEN EMPLOYED BY UNIVERSAL AMERICAN ENTERPRISES NEJP HAD BEEN PICKED UP BY THESE SAME PROTESTERS AT 0930 SATURDAY MORNING AND HELD FOR TEN HOURS, WAS RELEASED THE SAME EVENING AFTER HE HAD SIGNED A DOCUMENT RELATING TO THE SEVERANCE PAY FOR LAO EMPLOYEES OF UAE.

SINCE 1974 BERGGREN HAS WORKED ON A GENERATOR CONTRACT THE TOKYO-BASED FIRM HELD WITH THE NOW TERMINATED USAID MISSION

OF LAOS. HE HAS LIVED IN LAOS SINCE 1965.

3. THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE CONTINUES ITS REDUCTION OF MISSION PERSONNEL IN THE LAO CAPITAL. TWENTY-TWO OFFICIAL AMERICANS REMAIN IN VIENTIANE.
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